

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3817

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

COMUSSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

COMIPAC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SAIGON 3115

EXDIS MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI VS

SUBJECT: MILITARY SITUATION MR 2

FOLLOWING TEL RECEIVED FROM NHA TRANG MARCH 19 SENT ACTION EMBASSY
SAIGON INFO USDAO SAIGON H/W REPEATED TO YOU./* 153:

S E C R E T NHA TRANG 0187

EXDIS - MILITARY COMMANDS HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

DAO FOR AOSOP/OR-IX/IS

1. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS RELEASED AT MR-2'S DAILY BRIEFING
OF MARCH 19.

2. IN QUNAG DUC, THE COMMUNISTS MORTARED AND LAUNCHED A GROUND
ATTACK AGAINST KIEN DUC SUBSECTOR HQS ON MARCH 18, BUT WERE REPULSED.
(SINCE THE FALL OF DUC LAP DISTRICT, THE COMMUNISTS HAVE REPEATEDLY
HARASSED KIEN DUC SUBSECTOR HQS WITHOUT SUCCESS.) LATE NEWS FROM
OUR PROV REP INDICATES THAT ON THE SAME DAY THE 82ND RANGER BN TOOK
300 ROUNDS OF INCOMING ORDNANCE AT YU 740270, SUFFERING 14 WIA AT

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182000 HRS. THE 82ND RANGERS ALSO RECEIVED A GROUND ATTACK AT

YU 77518 (RESULTS NOT YET REPORTED). REPORTEDLY THE COMMUNISTS HAVE TAKEN CASUALTIES OF 115 KMA IN QUANG DUC SINCE MARCH 10.

3. IN DARLAC ON THE MORNING OF MARCH 18, ELEMENTS OF THE 44TH ARVN REGT (SUBSEQUENTLY PULLED BACK TO THE KHANH HOA BORDER) SIGHTED COMMUNIST TANKS AT BQ 15014. TAC AIR WAS CALLED IN AGAINST THE TANKS, REPORTEDLY DESTROYING 9 AND DAMAGING 2.

4. DAM RANG VILLAGE IN NORTHWESTERN TUYEN DUC (BP 005459), WHICH FOR SEVERAL DAYS HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO BE A LIKELY TARGET FOR A COMMUNIST GROUND ATTACK, TOOK TWO 82MM MORTAR SHELLS THE EVENING OF MARCH 18.

5. IN BINH DINH, THE COMMUNISTS FIRED 9 ROUNDS OF 107MM ROCKETS INTO PHU CAT AIRBASE EARLY ON MARCH 19, CAUSING NO CASUALTIES OR DAMAGE. LATE NEWS FROM OUR PROV REP INDICATES THAT AT 190250 HRS, THE VC DESTROYED A BRIDGE ON QL-1 AT BR 924826. GVN OFFICIALS FEAR THAT NOW THAT THE GVN HAS ABANDONED THE HIGHLANDS IN SOUTHERN QUANG NGAI, THE 52ND NVA BRIGADE MAY ENTER NORTHERN BINH DINH.

6. BG NGUYEN VAN CHUC, CHIEF OF ARVN ENGINEERS, STATED AT NHA TRANG THIS MORNING THAT HE ANTICIPATES VC LOCAL FORCE ATTACKS UPON THE HIGHLANDS EVACUATION CONVOY EAST OF SONG HOA DISTRICT TOWN, PHU YEN, WHEN THE CONVOY COMMENCES ITS LAST LEG LEADING INTO TUY HOA AREA. (RLO TUY HOA, CITING PROVINCE SOURCES, REPORTS APPROXIMATELY 5,000 MIXED MILITARY/CIVILIAN VEHICLES AT SONG HOA DISTRICT BY 181300 HRS) BG CHUC ADDED THAT HE HAS REQUESTED SECURITY FORCES (NFI) TO PROVIDE ADVANCE/FLANK SECURITY FOR REMAINDER OF TRIP. THUS FAR, HOWEVER, THE CONVOY HAS TAKEN MINIMAL HARASSMENT FROM THE VC.

7. AT 190130 HRS, A SHIP CARRYING THE 3RD AIRBORNE GROUP FROM DA NANG ENTERED CAM RANH BAY. THE GROUP WILL BE DEPLOYED IN NORTHERN KHANH HOA SHORTLY. SPEAR UNQTE
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